

VZCZCXYZ0000
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHAM #2418/01 0951056
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 051056Z APR 06
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9383
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0317
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 1224
RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUMICEA/USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL//CCPA// IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS AMMAN 002418

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARN, NEA/PA, NEA/AIA, INR/NESA, R/MR,
I/GNEA, B/BXN, B/BRN, NEA/PPD, NEA/IPA FOR ALTERMAN
USAID/ANE/MEA
LONDON FOR TSOU
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON IRAQ

Editorial Commentary

-- "Thousands of American mistakes"

Columnist Aida Najjar writes on the op-ed page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (04/04): "When the world superpower commits thousands of mistakes in Iraq, it is something very serious, because these mistakes have thousands of negative consequences, not only on Iraq and the region, but also on America itself and the whole world. Frankly, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice admitted that her

SIPDIS

country committed thousands of tactical mistakes in Iraq. Despite this serious acknowledgement, the diplomat was a coward not to continue to admit that America and Britain's invasion of Iraq in March 2003 was a mistake and tried to justify that by saying it was done to oust the former regime, and then made things worse when she placed its country as the watchdog of the world and defended the American strategy of invasion and war as 'correct'. This twisted and incomplete boldness coincides with the American media's escalating and firm criticism of the Bush administration, and there is currently a war of words between the Bush administration and the media. The administration tries to blame the media for presenting the negative image of the war and events [in Iraq], while the entire world knows that the war is in effect frightening, horrible, horrifying and inhumane events reaping thousands of innocent lives because of America's war. The Bush administration had used its media at the beginning of the war to convey what is suitable and had employed more than 700 reporters embedded with the troops, thus distorting the facts. Today, the media tells about the events that are constructed by the war, from the human rights violations in Abu Ghraib prison, through the serious security situation, to the destruction of Iraq and its holy sites.. The fact that Rice acknowledged the thousands of mistakes committed does not spare the Bush administration from the war crimes and their effects on Iraq, the region and the world. What the Secretary needs to do is admit that the reasons for

SIPDIS

the war are wrong, that creating new concepts from terrorism, freedom and democracy is wrong, that setting America as the watchdog of freedom and justice is wrong, and that America's defiance of the world with the thousands of mistakes was and continues to be wrong. Trying to blame others - countries, peoples, individuals and the media - for mistakes committed will not do. America's image will continue to be bad, because events conveyed by the media are genuine."

-- "Did the post-Ja'afari era start?"

Columnist Mohammad Kharroub writes on the op-ed page of semi-official, influential Arabic daily Al-Rai (04/04): "When Secretary Rice and her British partner Jack Straw were asked whether they consider their surprise visit to Baghdad meddling in Iraq's internal affairs and a behavior that does not constitute respect for democracy, their answer was truly horrific. Straw, and later Rice, said: the United States has paid a huge price for liberating Iraq from the former regime. More than two thousand American soldiers and more than one hundred British soldiers died, not to mention the billions of dollars that we spent and continue to spend. This gives us the right to make decisions and say our opinions. This is the naked truth, and there is no need to hide behind the illusions and the cliché words and statements often launched by Washington and London. The Iraqis must realize that the United States, as is the United Kingdom, is not a charitable organization and its president is not the Robin Hood of international politics. This is rather the global American strategy that controls the path and fate of the empire that Bush and his administration are trying to establish before the geopolitical equations change and before the project of the democratization of the Middle East collapses."

HALE